

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15  
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FM AMCONSUL EDINBURGH  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1214  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UK  
SUBJECT: DEVOLUTION: A DEAD DUCK?

THE DEFEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT ON THE GUILLOTINE DEBATE SEEMS TO HAVE LEFT MANY PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND UNEXCITED, BUT THE SCOTTISH PRESS IS HAVING A FIELD DAY. THE "GLASGOW HERALD" TERMED IT A "STAGGERING DEFEAT WHICH WILL STUN MOST PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND." "THE SCOTSMAN", IN ITS EDITORIAL "DEATH OF A BILL," CHARGES "THE GOVERNMENT PREFER THE HUMILIATION OF HAVING THE CENTRE-PIECE OF THEIR LEGISLATURE WRECKED TO FACING THE ELECTORS AT THE NADIR OF THEIR FORTUNES," AND DESCRIBED IT "AS A MORTAL BLOW TO SCOTLAND'S HOPE FOR DEVOLUTION." "THE SCOTTISH DAILY RECORD" CALLED LAST NIGHT'S ACTION A "DEATH SENTENCE" WHILE THE "SCOTTISH EXPRESS" SAID THE ACTION WILL CAUSE FURY AND PREDICTS IT WILL OPEN GATES TO BITTER AND ANGRY REPERCUSSIONS.

COMMENT: FEELINGS IN THE LOCAL PUB TODAY DID NOT REACH SUCH A HEIGHT OF VEHEMENCE. THE GENERAL REACTION WAS "WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU EXPECT FROM THAT CROWD DOWN IN WESTMINSTER?" A TELEPHONE CHECK AROUND SCOTLAND BROUGHT A SIMILAR REACTION BUT WITH THESE INTERESTING AND SOMETIMES PREDICTABLE COMMENTS:

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1. JAMES KIRKWOOD, DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SCOTTISH TUC IN GLASGOW IS GREATLY DISAPPOINTED. HE FEELS THAT THE DEFEAT HAS SET THE CLOCK BACK SEVERAL YEARS IN THE QUEST FOR DEVOLUTION. HE WAS THE ONLY PERSON INTERVIEWED WHO FELT THAT DEMANDS FOR SEPARATION WOULD BE FELT IMMEDIATELY AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVE VOICE IN SCOTLAND.

2. MRS. AITKEN, LOCAL ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY, STATED THAT "WHILE THE LIBERAL PARTY WAS THE FIRST TO ADVOCATE SELF GOVERNMENT FOR SCOTLAND, THERE WAS NO WAY THE BILL COULD BE RUSHED THROUGH THE HOUSE." SHE PREDICTS A CONSTITUTION PARTY WILL BE FORMED IN A MONTH AND A BETTER BILL PRODUCED IN THREE MONTHS TIME.

3. MISS SINCLAIR, PRESSWOMAN WITH THE SNP, ALSO FEELS VERY DISAPPOINTED AND SAYS THAT BESIDES THE GENERAL DISSAPPOINTMENT THERE IS GREAT DISALLUSIONMENT WITHIN THE SNP WHICH NOW REALIZES "WESTMINSTER OFFICIALS CAN'T BE TRUSTED."

4. A.R. MILLER CBE CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE MOTHERWELL BRIDGE (HOLDINGS) LTD AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE CBI PANEL ON DEVOLUTION REPORTED HE FEELS THAT IN INDUSTRY THERE IS LITTLE INTEREST FOR DEVOLUTION IF IT MEANS AN ASSEMBLEY. HE HIMSELF SEES THAT THE DEFEAT MAKES LITTLE DIFFERENCE TO SCOTLAND. PRIOR TO MY CALL HE HAD TELEPHONED THE WORKS DIRECTORS AT TWO PLANTS IN MOTHERWELL AND UPHALL TO DETERMINE EMPLOYEE REACTION. MOTHERWELL EMPLOYEES APPARENTLY WERE INDIFFERENT BUT THE UPHALL EMPLOYEES (TAM DAYELL'S CONSTITUENCY) DID SUPPORT DEVOLUTION.

5. LOTHIAN REGIONAL CONVENOR AND LABOR PARTY LEADER PETER WILSON WAS NOT SURPRISED AT THE DEFEAT. HE SPENT THE WEEKEND WITH SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO WERE ALREADY PESSIMISTIC. HE DOES NOT THINK THERE WILL BE MANY CHANGES IN PARTY STRENGTH UNLESS THE DEFEAT IS MADE A CAMPAIGN ISSUE. IF THIS HAPPENS LABOR WILL HAVE TO CAMPAIGN ON POLICY ISSUES. MR. WILSON  
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SAID HE HAD SPENT THE MORNING CHECKING AROUND ANEUTHIS WAS THE GENERAL AGREEMENT FROM SEVERAL DIFFERENT POLITICAL PERSUASION.

CONCLUSION: AS THE PRESENT THERE SEEMS TO BE NO SPIRIT ON ANYONE'S PART TO GET THINGS MOVING AGAIN. IT IS BEST SUMMED UP BY A LOCAL DENTIST WHEN ASKED HIS REACTION TODAY "I'M A DEVOLUTIONIST, BUT I'M FED UP WITH IT ALL."

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## Message Attributes

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